
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers
Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



October 19, 2007

House Votes to Sustain SCHIP Veto

The House voted on Thursday to sustain the President's veto of a flawed bill to drastically expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Currently, states can cover families earning up to 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) or \$41,300 for a family of four. The bill under consideration would have allowed certain states to cover families up to 400 percent of the FPL or approximately \$82,000 in annual income. Congressman Miller supported the veto because the bill would have nearly doubled current spending on SCHIP by authorizing more than \$35 billion to provide government-run health care for the middle-class and allowed illegal aliens to gain access to taxpayer funded health care. Congressman Miller remains firmly committed to reauthorizing SCHIP, but in a responsible way that covers poor children first and guards against abuse by illegal aliens. As an alternative, he has cosponsored the More Children, More Choices Act which would expand SCHIP for poor children while providing a refundable tax credit to middle-class families so they can continue purchasing health care on the private market.

Extension of Internet Tax Ban Approved by House

On Tuesday, the House of Representatives voted to extend a moratorium on taxing the Internet for an additional four years. The current ban on Internet taxation is set to expire November 1st. While Congressman Miller strongly supported the measure, he will continue to advocate for a permanent ban on the taxation of Internet access. The Internet is the single most important resource for businesses and consumers today. In twenty years, it has revolutionized the way we communicate, learn, and conduct business. As a cosponsor of the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act, Congressman Miller is firmly committed to barring all taxes on this invaluable technological resource.

Immigration Reform Caucus Continues Push to Free Border Patrol Agents

This week, Congressman Miller joined 46 Members of Congress in urging Attorney General nominee Michael Mukasey to conduct an immediate review of the case of imprisoned Border Patrol Agents Ramos and Compean upon assuming office. In a letter sent to Mr. Mukasey, Members outlined their serious concerns with the agents' prosecution and imprisonment. The fact that these two dedicated Border Patrol agents have been allowed to remain in prison for more than nine months for simply doing their job is an outrage and Congressman Miller will continue working to secure their freedom.

Agreement Reached to Expedite California Transportation Projects

Last week, the U.S. Department of Transportation agreed to work with California state and local agencies as part of the Southern California National Freight Gateway Cooperation agreement to find innovative ways to reduce traffic congestion, expand freight capacity, and improve air quality in the Southern California region. The joint effort will focus initially on streamlining the environmental review process which can add years to any transportation project. Congressman Miller championed an initiative in the SAFETEA-LU Act of 2005 to speed up the environmental review process of transportation projects by allowing the State of California to have more control of the process to ensure federal and state reviews are not duplicative. He will continue to work with state and federal officials to fund and construct projects that will help relieve congestion by moving people and goods more efficiently.

42nd District Celebrates Drug Prevention Awareness

Congressman Miller would like to commend the schools and cities of the 42nd District for celebrating Red Ribbon Week. Since 1985, the Red Ribbon Campaign has been dedicated to creating a drug-free America and reaching millions of young people who show their commitment to a healthy, drug-free lifestyle by wearing or displaying a red ribbon. Some of the Red Ribbon Week celebrations include: Mission Viejo's 19th Annual Walk Against Drugs on October 20th at 8:00 A.M. with Astronaut Michael Lopez-Alegria, a La Habra Community Breakfast on October 26th at 6:30 A.M. featuring a speech by Judge Robert B. Hutson, a Pancake Breakfast and Community Rally on October 20th from 8:00 to 11:00 A.M. at the Whittier Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, and numerous other local events. For more information about local Red Ribbon Week events, contact your local school district or city.

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